MASAI CUSTOMS

Ee-jokgwe.

Ten ilk ol-mórua loo'l-Kisomo, enjúkj en-gumi enye lótwo in-dikítin enye gítin, en 'e-gítin en 'e-dure en-'ligurtyuk nemunte 'e-gwe; kake nanítin aíyawa 'e-gítin en 'e-dure en-'ligurtyuk nanete 'ag-eyuk.

E'yo 'e-gwíyo-kwa nanwa 'ag-eyuk 'e-gítin en-'ag-eíjik en-nodgidanye.

Tani nanete ol-mórua 'e-gwe, enjúkj il-oloíkwa lempwa 'e-gítin en 'ligurtyuk; kake enjúkj i-ligurtyuk ol-oloíkwa ekítin kítwa, nwa tuwwa; enjúkj lókwa loontigítin kítwa, ninje en'ya 'ligurtyuk.

Ore ten ele e-ligurtyúsi enye eng-eyúsi loo'l-oloíkwa loontigítin kítwa, arukí te-lighwa-tudgwei, nolaíwúi lóngwa 'e-gítin nontejídge, enjúsyuki enje ol-le-kíwa-wáj.

Ten, ten ilk ol-mórua, enítjwa e-ligurtyúsi enye nóto en-gumi kake eng-eyúsi, enjúkj 'e-gítin enyuwa, ejuli nanítin ol-epúny.

Enjúkj il-Kisomo 'e-ngúkjwai lempe, nwa tuwwa.

Inheritance.

When the father of a family dies, his eldest son inherits all his property[1], and also the herds and flocks belonging to the childless widows, but not those which are the property of widows who have sons. 426

The sons by each wife inherit the cattle belonging to their mother's family.

If a man dies childless, his brothers inherit his cattle and his half-brothers his wives. It is unlawful for a man's own brothers (i.e. brothers by the same mother) to take his wives. [387]

Should a widow have a son by her late husband's half-brother or by another man, the child is given the cattle which he would otherwise have inherited had his mother's former husband been alive, and is considered to belong to that family. [387] [421] [425]

If a man dies and leaves a son who is a minor, the property which he inherits is taken care of for him until he grows up[2]. [423] [424]

It is considered unlawful for a man to inherit the property of his maternal uncle. [424] [426]

[1] The Masai distribute their herds and flocks amongst their wives during their lifetime, each one being given a certain number to look after and milk. The cattle so distributed are said to belong to the wife's family, and are recognised as the property of her sons, who, however, do not exercise ownership until after their father's death. [412]

[2] In a case of this kind, the child does not go to the wars, two sturdier sons often be to circumcised.

11: Leakey E-6 (no date) 1938 FL12 Masai FL12
Kenya

from having the honour of the host of her initiation." "Should the man decide to marry the girl, this latter is counted as one of those which must be handed over for the marriage transaction (see Marriage).

Girls' Initiation.—Among the Masai girls are initiated singly and not in groups, nor are they initiated until a good many years after puberty, for as soon as a girl is initiated she must be married, and cease to have any intercourse with the warriors or boys. Except under the circumstances described above, a girl is not initiated until her breasts begin to droop to a marked extent. As soon as this is noticeable, her mother informs the father, who makes the necessary arrangements. If the girl's mother is living at the time at a manyatta with one of her sons, then the girl's initiation will take place at the manyatta, otherwise it will take place at the home village. The essential point is that initiation must take place in the mother's hut (or in the hut of another of her father's wives, should her own mother be dead). The father comes to the place where the day of the ceremony has been fixed and beer is prepared. A cow called *olokiriyoka* is slaughtered either before the actual operation or just after it. This is the "cow for childbearing," and is supposed to insure fertility. This cow is eaten by all those present at the ceremony. The actual operation is performed by an old woman, who is a skilled operator (she may be either a Masai or a Dorobo), and the girl sits on a skin inside the hut during the operation. The operation is said to be the same as that used by the Kikuyu on their girls, and this is a form of clitoridectomy, but exact details cannot be obtained from the men. As soon as the operation is over the operator makes the girl to "choose her of the blood right" and a cow is then slaughtered and given to the operator. This cow is called *olengwai*. Next a cow is killed called *olokiliakua* to provide meat and fat for the girl during convalescence.

Shaving Ceremony.—Finally after the girl is healed and before she can go to her husband's village, a cow is killed called *olkeeni*, which is the "cow for the shaving," and at the same time the girl's head is shaved by her mother.

Part V.—Marriage.

Exogamy.—Marriage is always exogamous as far as sub-clans are concerned, but marriage within the same clan is allowed. This rule not only applies to marriage but to all forms of sexual intercourse. No man, whether as a boy, warrior, or a married man, may at any time ever have sexual intercourse with any woman, girl or child of his own sub-clan. This is the strictest rule of all Masai sex regulations, and the penalty for any breach of this rule is very severe indeed (see below).

A woman remains a member of her own sub-clan even after marriage, but her children belong to the sub-clan of her husband.

Betrothal.—Amongst the Masai there are two usual methods of betrothal:—

(1) Betrothal of unborn children.
(2) Betrothal of infant girls.

913 931 601 *Gifts in Certain Relations.*—A somewhat similar custom to that which exists that a grown-up son must give certain presents to all children born to his father, as follows:—

(i) To a young girl-child, either a heifer or else a young cow or young she-goat which has not yet had young. If the former present is given the child in future calls its brother (or half-brother) *lenabi*, and if either of the two latter animals is given the appropriate name is *lolova*.

(ii) To a boy-child, either a heifer or a young bull or else a young cow or she-goat which has not yet had young. The following are the appropriate names by which the boy henceforward calls the same: *Lenabi* if the gift was a young cow, *ingisi* if the gift was a young she-goat, *olovo* if the gift was a heifer, *olkilowo* if the gift was a young bull.

A grown-up son must also give a present to any cow wife married by his father, the animal given and the name thenceforward used by the woman to the man being exactly as in the case of girl-children above.

604 *Mother's Brother.*—Among the Masai I can find no trace of any special functions of the mother's brother, and he has no special position in relation to his sister or her children.

589 *Widowhood.*—There is no idea of exclusiveness attaching to widowhood, and therefore there is no ceremonial purification ceremony before sexual life can be indulged in by a widow. When a woman is left a widow she builds herself a hut with one of her husband's own brothers (*i.e.* brothers by the same mother), and he becomes responsible for her welfare and acts as her guardian to her children as far as making arrangements for initiation and marriage, etc., are concerned. In no circumstances, however, may this brother or any other of her husband's own brothers have sexual intercourse with the woman. If she is still of child-bearing age she is expected to go on having children (who will rank as her late husband's), and to this end she may have sexual relations with:—

597 939 (i) *Any man of her late husband's age-group, who are not excluded by other restrictions (see above).*

(ii) *Any of her late husband's half-brothers (i.e. brothers by a different mother).*

(iii) *Any other man not otherwise excluded.*

939 *Sickness.*—My informant was unwilling or unable to give me any detailed information about the treatment of sick people, save that medicines were made from the barks and roots of various trees and from the stomach juices of slaughtered animals.

PART VII.—DEATH AND BURIAL.

96 *Death.*—Death is looked upon with fear and, therefore—except in the case of very old men and women past child-bearing—every precaution is taken to avoid a

/42 cont./

[illegible] does temporarily move to her mother's, and the man has the right, in the course of the next two or five months, to more definitively whether or not he wants to have the woman back. If he demands her return, she must obey; otherwise she may marry again at the end of the stated period of time. The person that does pay back the full bride price to the divorced husband, though he may refuse to accept it, and, to be sure, with the legal consequence that all the children that the woman may still bear belong to him.

The male relatives seek to persuade a runaway -- not divorced -- wife to return, at first amicably, and, if this is of no avail, by a beating in the presence of the husband, while the husband, in that he keeps the children to whom the woman gives birth, hopes to achieve her return by means of mother love. It is said that only in the worst cases is there a lack of success, especially since no pleasant lies awaits the returning woman. She may not legally marry again, and, if she goes to another man in order to remain with him permanently, the children arising from this affair belong to the man whom she left. Though the principle is valid that all children remain with the father, he almost always keeps only the boys and leaves the girls to the mother. The latter also roles along any male suckling and keeps him, but only until he is weaned. Then the most return him to his father. Divorce during a woman's pregnancy does not occur. If two divorced spouses wish to remarry, /42/ the woman returns to the man without any ceremony. Divorce is generally rather rare. Usually the man has the woman from whom he wishes to be separated live peacefully in one of his huts, but he does not pay any attention to her. Barrenness is not grounds for divorce, nor is marital infidelity on the part of the women, a concept with which the Ideal wife is not familiar (3).

1. /The following footnote is a translation of the texts of the original source./ A husband returns his wife to the guest or night, while he himself spends the night outside the dwelling. To keep the wife from the guest is considered insulting. Wives are accustomed to sleeping at any time with innocuous

/Footnote 1 cont./ husbands. Brides to whom a woman has given birth from live living with another man belong to the husband, even though they also call their genitor father.

They abort an immature fetus when the woman has been made pregnant by another who is sick or old or feeble. Sometimes in the form of a potion are used, which are said to be injurious during the first two months of pregnancy. After two months of pregnancy they wait for parturition and kill the newborn child.

They are accustomed to having intercourse lying on their sides, the woman's upper knee placed over the man's loins. They do not commonly cohabit except at night. They are afraid of coitus in daylight, lest the man's blood smattered on the vessels of his wife would result nothing but water.

Boys and girls silently begin to practice cohabitation at the age of eight or ten.

It is considered extremely dangerous to break wind in the presence of women.

v.

Pregnancy. -- Behavior of the pregnant woman and her husband. -- Confinement. -- Restriction in connection with the birth. -- Twins. -- Deformed child. -- Killing newborn children. -- Behavior of the woman in childbed. -- The newborn child. -- Childhood. -- Children's games.

As soon as the women feels pregnant, the spouses separate until after the coming period, which lasts approximately 1 1/2 to 2 years. Another man may not touch the woman during this period, any more than her husband. This stipulation, however, seems to be little

In the

Filcon/ lineage of the El Kiberón every newborn boy is exposed to an ordeal through which it is supposed to be shown whether or not his begetter belongs to another lineage. In the evening, when the livestock comes home, the child is laid in the entrance of the kraal so that the entire herd of cattle steps over it. If the little one is killed during this or so seriously wounded that it dies from it, it is regarded as a bastard.

In most districts the young mother is not obliged to live isolated in the hut for a specific number of days, but leaves it as soon as her condition permits, often the very next day. In others she may not go out of the hut during the first two days after the delivery, during which time the woman who assisted her does all the work for her. For four days following the birth neither fire nor household objects may be carried out of the hut. During this time the woman smears her forehead daily with white clay. She does the same when, before the ensuing recovery, before the complete recession of the genital parts, alone or with the infant, she goes out of the immediate vicinity of the hut or of the kraal. Until the newborn child can walk, the father may not eat any food in the hut and may not enter it during the first two days after the birth. If he has had sexual intercourse with one of his other wives, he may not touch the baby the next day. If the mother dies during the nursing period, another woman carries the child, whereby her own children with respect to it enter into the relationship of lower brothers and sisters, regarded as consanguinity, or else it is fed cow's milk by means of a bottle.

The newborn baby is given a sleeping place beside that of its mother, whose leather apron serves it as an underlayer. Here the child rests, and, to be sure, on its side, not lying on its back, usually only so long as the mother is sitting beside it and during the night. Otherwise she carries the little one around with her, and, to be sure, on her back on a rule, more rarely straddling her hip or on her arm. The latter way of carrying is customary only with very small children, say during the first month of life. Even while the mother is working, her child remains on her back, held fast by her upper apron. Only if the little one makes its discomfort known by prolonged crying does the hand it to a woman ready to be quieted or are it -- if it is somewhat bigger -- on a cloak and sets out on